
RUBY'S CHINESE NEW YEAR
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Every year, Ruby's grandmother came to visit for Chinese New Year. Together they celebrated, eating special foods and making drawings for good luck. But this year, Grandmother was unable to travel. She would miss spending the holiday with Ruby.

And so Ruby made a decision. If Grandmother could not come to Ruby, Ruby would go to Grandmother!

Ruby drew the most beautiful picture of her family seated around a table full of noodles, dumplings, fish, vegetables, and holiday sweets—a gift for Grandmother. She folded the red paper, tucked it into a red envelope, and slipped it into her pocket.

Then she set off!



Not far down the path, Ruby spied Cat and Rat.

"Hello, Cat and Rat. I'm taking a gift for Chinese New Year to Grandmother. Would you like to come along?"

"Yes, of course!" said Cat. "But how will we cross the meadow and the pond?"

"Let's ask Ox," said Rat. "She's so strong and dependable."

And so Cat and Rat and Ruby continued on their way.



Ox was walking along the path to the farmer's home. On her back she carried packages of rice cakes and candies—sweet treats for the New Year.

"Hello, Ox," called Cat and Rat. "We are taking a gift for Chinese New Year to Grandmother. Would you like to come along?"

"I would be happy to," said Ox. "Climb on my back; we will make the journey together."

And so Ox, Cat and Rat, and Ruby continued on their way.



Before the group had taken two steps, Tiger and Rabbit bounded out of the bushes, streamers flying behind them.

"Hello, Tiger. Hello, Rabbit," said Ox. "We are taking a gift for Chinese New Year to Grandmother. Would you like to come along?"

**"Oh yes, that sounds fun!"** said Tiger and Rabbit in unison.

And so Cat took a seat on Tiger's powerful back, and Rat perched between Rabbit's soft, friendly ears.

Together, Tiger and Rabbit, Ox, Cat and Rat, and Ruby continued on their way.




They soon passed Dragon and Snake, who were making paper lanterns.

"Hello, friends! Where are you off to?" asked Snake.

"We are taking a gift to Grandmother," said Tiger. "Would you like to come along?"

**"Of course I would!"**

Snake loved Grandmother and was happy to visit her.

"We will bring the lanterns," said Snake.

"Will you come too, Dragon?" asked Rabbit.

"Of course," said Dragon, who was always ready for an adventure.

So Dragon and Snake, Tiger and Rabbit, Ox, Cat and Rat, and Ruby continued on their way.


As they walked along, Ruby saw Horse and Goat grazing in the meadow.
"Hello," said Dragon and Snake. "We are taking a gift to Grandmother. Would you like to come along?"
**"Yes,"** said Horse and Goat together.
First they gathered flowers from the meadow. Then Horse and Goat, Dragon and Snake, Tiger and Rabbit, Ox, Cat and Rat, and Ruby continued on their way.



After a short while, Horse and Goat, Dragon and Snake, Tiger and Rabbit, Ox, Cat and Rat, and Ruby reached the pond, where Monkey and Rooster were catching fish for the holiday feast.

And through the shrubs, just on the other side, Ruby could see—

**Grandmother's house!**


With a leap and a bound,
Ruby dove into the pond.
She would swim
to Grandmother's!
She was so close.




Together, Dog and Pig, Monkey and Rooster, Horse and Goat, Dragon and Snake, Tiger and Rabbit, Ox, Rat, Ruby, and Grandmother laid out their table. Everyone was ready to celebrate Chinese New Year.
春
吉
福
茶
Except for Cat, who had **fallen fast asleep**.



As Monkey and Rooster, Horse and Goat, Dragon and Snake, Tiger and Rabbit, Ox, Cat and Rat, and Ruby turned to look, Dog and Pig came racing out to greet them. They covered Ruby's face with kisses and tickled her until she shrieked with joy.

The door opened . . .


. . . and Grandmother appeared.
"Ruby! What a wonderful surprise,"
said Grandmother.


"It's not ruined!" crowed Rooster.
"We have fish," said Monkey.
"And flowers," said Horse and Goat.
"We have lanterns," said Dragon and Snake.
"And streamers," added Tiger and Rabbit.
"We have rice cakes and sweets," said Ox.
"And we have our family,"
said Cat and Rat, looking toward the house.
家
友

When Ruby finally reached the other side of the pond, Monkey and Rooster, Horse and Goat, Dragon and Snake, Tiger and Rabbit, Ox, and Cat and Rat were waiting with her card for Grandmother.

"Oh no," cried Ruby. "It's ruined. Everything is ruined!"





"I brought you a gift for Chinese New Year," said Ruby, "but it's wet. And ruined!"

"Don't worry," said Grandmother. "It will dry. And seeing you and your friends today is the best gift of all."